

**Task Force on the
Education of African
American Students**

**1999 African American Task Force
Findings and Responses**

**THREE
YEAR
REPORT**

"ABOUT OUR CHILDREN"

"It's not about me....It's not about you.....It's about our children!

(Special Thanks to Oscar Wright -the originator of our theme.)

00 00615

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL
STUDIES LIBRARY

***The Task Force on the Education of African American Students
wish to acknowledge the following people for assisting and making
this report possible:***

Wandra Boyd

Gil Brenum

Mary Camber

Toni Cook

Diane Flowers

Sylvester Hodges

Brenda Knight

Oscar Wright

Dr. Alan Young

&

Oakland Alliance of Black School Educators

00 00615

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL
STUDIES LIBRARY

FEB 24 2025

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

African American Task Force Members

Joseph Adwere-Boamah

Ralph Baker

Leo Baxile

Wandra Boyd

Robert Chew

Toni Cook

Barbara Dean

Gwen DeBow

Carolyn M. Gettridge

Willie Hamilton

Reygan Harmon

Julie Henderson

Person Herring

Sylvester Hodges

Linda James

Carrie Jefferson

Carol Y. Johnson

Claude-Elton Josiah

Brenda Knight

Odest Logan

Brenda Lynch

Jannat Muhammad

John Ogbu

Folasade Oladele

Yolanda Peeks

Carole C. Qwan

Regina Rasheed

Carrie Secret

Nabeehah Shakir

Xerita Sharp

Alice Spearman

Steve Stevens

Isaac Taggart

Kenneth Tramiel St.

Carole M. Watson

Alma Williams

Ronald Williams

Oscar Wright

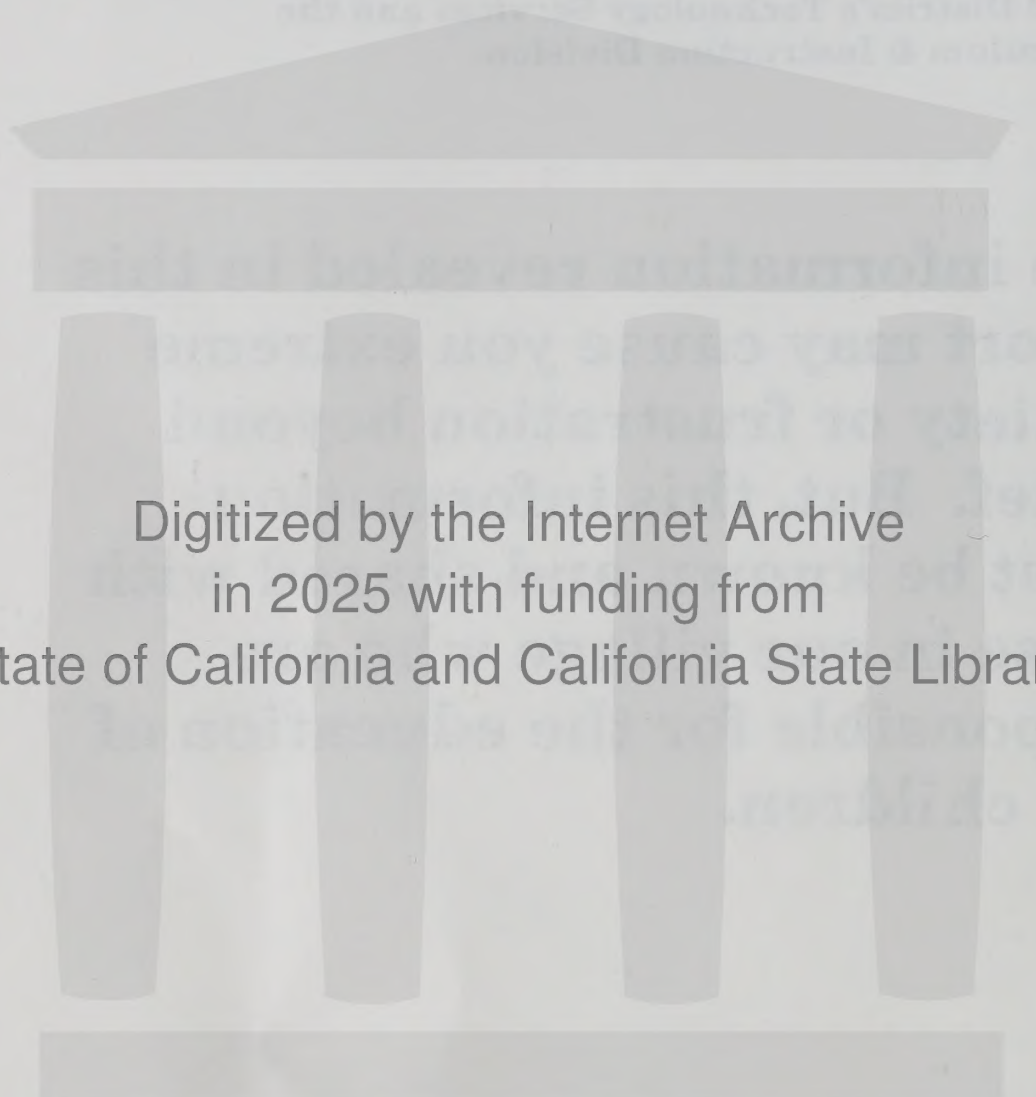
Alan Young

"Rebuilding The Village"

WARNING

The data contained in the exhibits on the following pages, in this report, were derived from Oakland Unified School District's Technology Services and the Curriculum & Instruction Division.

The information revealed in this report may cause you extreme anxiety or frustration beyond belief. But, this information must be known and shared with those in our village who are responsible for the education of our children.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025 with funding from
State of California and California State Library

<https://archive.org/details/C123315769>

OAKLAND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Kenneth Rice	Board Director, District 1
Bruce Kariya	Board Director, District 2
Lucella Harrison	Board Director, District 3
Jean Quan	Board Director, District 4
Noel Gallo	Board Director, District 5
Dan Siegel	Board Director, District 6
Jason Hodge	Board Director, District 7

George Musgrove, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Cheryl Hightower, Deputy Superintendent
Robert Nicolai, Deputy Superintendent

Table of Content

Introduction.....	Page 1
Section I-Three Years Comparison Findings...	Pages 2-5
Section II-Suspensions Data,Facts,Responses.	Pages 6-12
Section III-Suspensions Financial Impact.....	Pages 13-15
Section IV-Truancy Data,Facts,Responses.....	Pages 16-22
Summary Statement.....	Pages 23-24

**African American Task Force
Three Year Report
Findings and Response
“About Our Children”**

Introduction:

“It’s not about me...It’s not about you... It’s about our children.”

“It’s not about me...It’s not about you... It’s about our children.”

It has been nearly three years since our first profound report on the status of most African American students in Oakland Public Schools. Our Task Force has spent many hours researching program information, collecting data; and analyzing facts and trends related to African American Students achievement over the last three years. This is not just about “Ebonics”, but about educating African American students.

This three year report reveals solid facts that tell us what is happening negatively with too many African American students in Oakland Public Schools. Next, we will present to you these factors orally, visually, and conclude with a disturbing declaration on the status of African American students in Oakland Unified School District.

Now give us your full attention for the next twenty minutes as we highlight some information you need to know contained in this report.

Section I

Three years COMPARISON OF FINDINGS

This section contains an exhibit I showing the original findings of the Task Force on the Education of African American students and the following two years in comparison (1996-'97, 1997-'98, 1998-'99).

The exhibit page is followed by a list of "facts and responses" implied in regards to each of the Task Force's findings. The "facts" represent the information revealed by the data, and the "responses" are the Task Force's relative statements to each fact noted.

Exhibit 1

Three years Comparison of Findings

Performance Indicator	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999
District Enrollment	51,706	53,831	54,373
Percent African Amer.	53%	51.0%	50%
Percent Special Ed	71%	67.1%	65.8%
Percent GATE	37%	28.2%	28.6%
Percent Retained	64%	56.8%	60.0%
Percent Truant	60%	56.8%	55.6%
Percent Attend School	71%	N/A	N/A
Percent Not Graduated	19%	16.4%	14.1% Comp HS only
Percent Suspended	80%	71.8%	72.8%
Average GPA	1.80	1.84	1.88

THREE YEARS COMPARISON OF FINDINGS FACTS & RESPONSES

1. **Fact:** The number of students enrolled in Oakland Public Schools increased over 1996 in Oakland Public Schools by 2,667 (.05%) over the last 3 years.
2. **Fact:** The percentage of African American students declined by 3.4% over the 3 Years, but the total number of students grew by 2,667 (.05%).

Response: The rise in O.P.S. student population reflects that non-African American students are increasing at a faster rate than African American students. The African American students remain at 50% or more.

3. **Fact:** The number of African American students in Special Education declined by 5.2% in 3 years.

Response: The 5.2% decline in African American students in Special Education is insignificant since the percentage of African American in O.P.S. declined by 3.4%. This indicates possible inadequate changes.

4. **Fact:** The number of African American students in GATE declined by 8.4% in 3 years.

Response: The reductions in the percentage of African American students in the GATE program also indicate that more African American students are not being provided with equal access and opportunity to advanced educational programs.

5. **Fact:** The number of African American students retained in the same grade decreased by 4% in 3 years.

Response: Since the districts African American student's percentage declined by 3.4% over three years; then the 4% decrease in African American students retained is numerically nullified. In other words things are the same business as usual.

6. **Fact:** The number of African American students truant declined by 4.4% in 3 years.

Response: The African American students truant decrease by 4.4% in 3 years is also nullified statistically by the 3.4% decline in the number of African American students.

7. **Fact:** The number of African American students that attend school information was not available when requested.

Response: Though the information on the number of African American students that attend school was not available, it is still needed to complete the Task Force's monitoring responsibilities.

8. **Fact:** The percentage of African American students that did not graduate may have declined by approximately 4.9% in 3 years. Non-comprehensive high school's information was not available when requested.

Response: While taking in consideration that some minor information involving non-comprehensive high schools, was not available, this 4.9% decline in African American student graduates can be estimated much higher since the decline in the percentage of African American students dropped by 3.4%.

9. **Facts:** The percentage of African American students suspended decreased by 7.2% in three years.

Response: After analyzing the suspension data, the Task Force discovered some major concerns which warrants special emphasis following this segment of the presentation. The section on suspensions will reveal our concerns.

10. **Facts:** The grade point average (GPA) increased by .08 in three years or .02.6 per year over three years.

Response: The grade point average (GPA) of 1.80 increased by .08 in three years or .02.6 per year. At this present rate of "improvement," it will take approximately 7 years to reach a 2.0 GPA (year 2007). We believe this is five years too long.

If nothing else, this information underscores that "Better is not always good enough," and in this situation, it is worse, because it is too slow..

SECTION II

SUSPENSIONS

“Our African American Males have a better chance of being suspended than graduating”

This section contains suspension (1996-1999) data by grade levels, elementary, middle, and high schools on separate Exhibits.

Each data page is followed by an analysis page of some of the information revealed by the data which we categorize as “facts”.

Then immediately after stating the facts indicated by the charts, the African American Task Force notes its “responses”.

Exhibit II

1996-'97 Elementary Suspensions

	Suspensions	% Suspensions
<i>All Males</i>	1,011	80% of all males suspended are African American
<i>African American Males</i>	812	
<i>All Females</i>	284	82% of all females suspended are African American
<i>African American Females</i>	233	
All Totals	1,295	81% of all Elementary suspensions are African American
African American Totals	1,045	

1997-'98 Elementary Suspensions

	Suspensions	% Suspensions
<i>All Males</i>	811	81% of all males suspended are African American
<i>African American Males</i>	657	
<i>All Females</i>	200	91% of all females suspended are African American
<i>African American Females</i>	181	
All Totals	1,011	83% of Elementary suspensions are African American
African American Totals	838	

1998-'99 Elementary Suspensions

	Suspensions	% Suspensions
<i>All Males</i>	993	81% of all males suspended are African American
<i>African American Males</i>	806	
<i>All Females</i>	310	88% of all females suspended are African American
<i>African American Females</i>	274	
All Totals	1,303	83% of all elementary suspensions are African American
African American Totals	1,080	

SUSPENSION

Elementary Schools Data on African American Students Reveals That:

Facts:

1. Elementary schools suspensions of African American students, both males and females, are out-of-control. The number of suspensions have increased since 1996.
2. There has been a continuous growth in the number of African American males being disproportionately suspended.
3. There has been a surge in the growth of African American females being suspended; and, they are disproportionately suspended.

Response:

The current data indicates that the School District has failed to decrease the number of African American students suspended, after the Task Force warning three years ago. Over the three years, the elementary school data reveals that, at an early age, increasing numbers of African American students are plagued with repeated incidences of suspensions. For example, the percent suspended in 1996 was 81% and in 1999 it was 83% of a higher enrollment.

Exhibit III

1996-'97 Middle Suspensions

	Suspensions	% Suspensions
<i>All Males</i>	1,878	67% of all males suspended are African American
<i>African American Males</i>	1,259	
<i>All Females</i>	930	74% of all females suspended are African American
<i>African American Females</i>	685	
All Totals	2,808	69% of all Middle School suspensions are African American
African American Totals	1,944	

1997-'98 Middle Suspensions

	Suspensions	% Suspensions
<i>All Males</i>	1,960	68% of all males suspended are African American
<i>African American Males</i>	1,326	
<i>All Females</i>	972	81% of all females suspended are African American
<i>African American Females</i>	783	
All Totals	2,932	72% of all middle school suspensions are African American
African American Totals	2,109	

1998-'99 Middle Suspensions

	Suspensions	% Suspensions
<i>All Males</i>	2,060	67% of all males suspended are African American
<i>African American Males</i>	1,385	
<i>All Females</i>	1,055	82% of all females suspended are African American
<i>African American Females</i>	823	
All Totals	3,115	71% of all middle school suspensions are African American
African American Totals	2,208	

SUSPENSION

The Middle Schools Data on African American Students Reveals that:

Facts:

1. Middle schools suspensions for African American students, both males and females, are increasingly out-of-control.
2. African American male's suspension numbers continue to increase over three years, creating a greater number of African American males being suspended since 1996 in middle schools.
3. African American females' suspension, numbers continue to increase since 1996 from 74% to 83% in 1999, of a larger enrollment.

Response:

The three years of middle schools data supports the belief that the number of African American students being suspended are increasing drastically. Both male and female African American students' suspension numbers are growing out-of-control. For example, in 1996 the percentage of African American suspensions were 69% and 71% in 1999 with a larger enrollment.

Exhibit IV

1996-'97 High School Suspensions

	Suspensions	% Suspensions
<i>All Males</i>	1,154	68% of males suspended are African American
<i>African American Males</i>	789	
<i>All Females</i>	558	76% of females suspended are African American
<i>African American Females</i>	425	
All Totals	1,712	71% of High School suspensions are African American
African American Totals	1,214	

1997-'98 High School Suspensions

	Suspensions	% Suspensions
<i>All Males</i>	1,344	63% of all males suspended are African American
<i>African American Males</i>	849	
<i>All Females</i>	674	72% of all females suspended are African American
<i>African American Females</i>	483	
All Totals	2,018	66% of High School suspensions are African American
African American Totals	1,332	

1998-'99 High School Suspensions

	Suspensions	% Suspensions
<i>All Males</i>	1,270	65% of all male suspended are African American
<i>African American Males</i>	830	
<i>All Females</i>	548	77% of all females suspended are African American
<i>African American Females</i>	423	
All Totals	1,818	69% of all High School suspensions are African American
African American Totals	1,253	

SUSPENSION

The High Schools data on African American Students Reveals That:

Facts:

1. The total number of African American students in high school suspended in 1999 exceeds the number suspended in 1996. This increase confirms that suspensions of African American students are also out-of-control at the high school level.
2. Since 1996 African American male students suspension rate has increased over three years to a disturbing number.
3. After three years, the African American females suspension rate has remained approximately the same.

Response:

Again, we find that the African American students suspension rate continue to increase rather than decrease, after three years of being alerted by the Task Force report in 1996. This trend of increased disproportion suspensions warrants special attention.

SECTION III

Suspensions Financial Impact

On the following pages, we show the financial impact of the high rate of African American students suspensions calculated for two years; to demonstrate the potential revenue loss to the school district, and how it continues to significantly increase each year.

	Students	Total Days Suspended	Cost	Revenue
African Amer. Males	3,021	14,321	\$23,000	\$415,300
African Amer. Females	1,720	7,561	\$19,500	\$219,260
TOTAL	4,541	21,882	\$42,500	\$634,560

Exhibit V

DISTRICT'S FINANCIAL IMPACT

1997-1998

	Total Students	Total Days Suspended	Cost per day	Revenue Loss
African Amer. Males	2,832	13,537	\$29.00	\$392,573
African Amer. Females	1,447	7,396	\$29.00	\$214,484
TOTAL	4,279	20,933	\$29.00	\$607,057

1998-1999

	Total Students	Total Days Suspended	Cost per day	Revenue Loss
African Amer. Males	3,021	14,321	\$29.00	\$415,309
African Amer. Females	1,520	7,561	\$29.00	\$219,269
TOTAL	4,541	21,882	\$29.00	\$634,578

SUSPENSIONS FINANCIAL IMPACT

Facts:

1. African American students suspensions has cost the School District over one million dollars for the last two year. (\$607,057 in 1997-'98 and \$634,578 in 1998-'99) due to their absences from school.
2. The increase in suspensions of African American students costs is nearly thirty thousand dollars above the previous year.

Responses:

1. The savings from in-school suspensions or other alternatives could provide the School District with thousands of dollars saved each year.
2. The yearly growth in suspension will cost the School District one million dollars per year within the next five years, unless actions, with proven success, are implemented this school year.
3. More important is that the loss in revenue reflects on the number of days African American students did not receive information related to being educated. In other words, you must be present to learn what is being taught.

TRUANCY DATA

SECTION IV

This section contains truancy information for the last three years. Included is comparison truancy between non-African Americans and African Americans. In order to provide clarity, the data is grouped by grade levels (Elementary, Middle, High School), and segregated to emphasize the significant differences between African American students and all other students (non-African American).

Exhibit VI

ELEMENTARY TRUANT STUDENTS

1996-97

Students	# Students Enrolled	Truant 3-5Times	#Days	Truant 6 times +	# Days	Total Days
Non-African American	15,857	1,271	4,030	451	5,391	9,421
African American	16,171	2,436	8,074	1,294	16,780	24,854
TOTAL	32,028	3,707	12,104	1,745	22,171	34,275
% African American	51%	66%	67%	74%	76%	73%

**=\$993,975
per year**

1997-1998

Students	# Students Enrolled	Truant 3-5Times	#Days	Truant 6 times +	# Days	Total Days
Non-African American	14,739	1,430	4,589	546	6,113	10,702
African American	14,796	2,131	7,359	1,294	16,139	23,498
TOTAL	29,535	3,561	11,948	1,840	22,252	34,200
% African American	50%	60%	62%	70%	73%	69%

**=\$991,800
per year**

1998-1999

Students	# Students Enrolled	Truant 3-5Times	#Days	Truant 6 times +	# Days	Total Days
Non-African American	15,552	2,415	7,943	1,314	15,874	23,817
African American	14,901	2,581	9,176	2,504	35,257	44,433
TOTAL	30,455	4,996	17,119	3,818	51,131	68,250
% African American	49%	52%	54%	66%	69%	65%

**=\$1,979,250
per year**

Elementary Truancy

Facts & Responses

Fact:

As we analyzed the Elementary truancy data over the last three years, we discovered that the number of African American student truant was increased by 1,356 students since 1996. Plus, even more shocking news is that African American students days truant increased by 19,579 since 1996. So we can see that more African American Elementary students are truant now for a greater number of days than three years after our Task Force report in 1996.

Response:

Our Task Force finds that when you do the math (as in Elementary truancy exhibit), the results are the best measurements of a failing effort by the School District at the primary grade level involving truancy reduction. We believe that the most resources should be focused at the primary level for the best opportunities to gain control of the truancy problem for African American students.

Exhibit VII

MIDDLE SCHOOL TRUANT STUDENTS

1996-97

Students	# Students Enrolled	Truant 3-5Times	#Days	Truant 6 times +	# Days	Total Days
Non-African American	4,804	676	2,194	549	12,484	14,678
African American	4,605	1,027	3,358	779	16,295	19,653
TOTAL	9,409	1,703	5,552	1,328	28,779	34,331
% African American	49%	60%	61%	59%	57%	57%

**=\$995,599
per year**

1997-1998

Students	# Students Enrolled	Truant 3-5Times	#Days	Truant 6 times +	# Days	Total Days
Non-African American	5,086	785	2,549	523	10,562	13,111
African American	5,097	1,093	3,647	799	15,512	19,159
TOTAL	10,183	1,878	6,196	1,322	26,074	32,270
% African American	50%	58%	59%	60%	60%	59%

**=\$935,830
per year**

1998-1999

Students	# Students Enrolled	Truant 3-5Times	#Days	Truant 6 times +	# Days	Total Days
Non-African American	5,342	809	2,649	576	12,667	15,316
African American	5,226	1,102	3,661	827	15,741	19,402
TOTAL	10,568	1,911	6,310	1,403	18,408	34,718
% African American	50%	58%	58%	59%	86%	56%

**=\$1,006,822
per year**

Middle School Truancy

Facts & Responses

Fact:

The number of African American students truant in the Middle Schools increased by 123 students since 1996 (difference in the number of African American students in 3 years). While the number of days out of school decreased by 251 days for African American students.

Response:

In the Middle Schools we find the number of African American students truant is still increasing, but the number of total days are slowly decreasing since 1996. Greater reductions are needed in both number of students and days-out-of-school to adequately address the disproportion number of African American students truant in Middle Schools.

Exhibit VIII

HIGH SCHOOL TRUANT STUDENTS

1996-97

Students	# Students Enrolled	Truant 3-5Times	#Days	Truant 6 times +	# Days	Total Days
Non-African American	4,804	720	2,424	711	17,341	19,765
African American	4,555	1,165	3,989	1,208	25,286	29,275
TOTAL	8,609	1,885	6,413	1,919	42,627	49,040
% African American	53%	62%	62%	63%	59%	60%

**=\$1,422,160
per year**

1997-1998

Students	# Students Enrolled	Truant 3-5Times	#Days	Truant 6 times +	# Days	Total Days
Non-African American	5,066	685	2,304	769	17,537	19,841
African American	5,250	1,229	4,240	1,277	25,503	29,743
TOTAL	10,316	1,914	6,544	2,046	43,040	49,584
% African American	51%	64%	65%	62%	59%	60%

**=\$1,437,936
per year**

1998-1999

Students	# Students Enrolled	Truant 3-5Times	#Days	Truant 6 times +	# Days	Total Days
Non-African American	5,502	748	2,493	811	17,724	20,217
African American	5,355	1,240	4,286	1,050	20,143	24,429
TOTAL	10,857	1,988	6,779	1,861	37,867	44,646
% African American	49%	62%	63%	56%	53%	55%

**=\$1,294.734
per year**

High School Truancy

Facts & Responses

Fact:

Since 1996, the number of African American students truant decreased by 83 and the number of days decreased by 4,846.

Response:

The drop in the number of African American students truant and the number of days they were truant appears encouraging at the high school level. The decrease in truants at the High School level, may be due to many previous truants already dropped out of school by the time they reach High School.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

After researching, analyzing and developing this three year report "About Our Children," the African American Task Force finds that the Oakland Unified School District is perpetuating a form of "Educational Genocide" against African American students, by continuing to allow these horrendous conditions noted in this report to grow out-of-control. The Task Force believes that the facts in this report exceeded our earlier declaration of an "Epidemic" warning to the status of being "Educational Genocide." Therefore, we are upgrading our classification like you would upgrade a "storm" to a "hurricane" when the wind grows stronger and more dangerous.

As depicted in the segregated data on African American students, many of them are being conditioned or programmed to fail at an early age; and, it continues throughout their k-12 grade education. Once you review the math, you will agree that the results of this report are extremely disappointing and alarming, especially to the African American Community.

Remember just three years ago the Task Force presented Oakland School Board with detailed researched and prescribed recommendations (December 18, 1996) tailored to help African American students. The recommendations were accepted and approved by the School Board's vote of seven to zero. After some minor modifications in 1997, the present School Board members also approved the same document. These properly adopted plans were never implemented as agreed upon. Therefore, we will not spend any more time and energy on recommendations to this board.

We can no longer wait on you, the School Board, to do the right thing. Now our Task Force must sound the alarm loud and often throughout our village, so that our elders, leaders, and prominent institutions can join us in activities to eliminate these outrageous, systemic educational conditions. If we fail to prepare our children for the future, then, we will be held accountable for the results. So we, the Task Force, must take our role to a new level of advocacy for our children.

As we conclude this report "About our Children," it is urgent that we all maintain our commitments, efforts, and focus on data based solutions and not on unproven opinions or experiments to be used on our youth. Our children's future existence and quality of life will be determined by what we, the African American Task Force and our village do during our watch. It is our hopes that the information contained in this report will serve as a "late wake-up call" to those of you who are sleeping on our watch.

Remember....

It is not about me.....

It is not about you....

It is about our Children!

